DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 464 802 RC 023 548

AUTHOR	Guttman, Cynthia
TITLE	Voices across the Hills: Thailand's Hill Areas Education Project. Education for All: Making It Work. Innovation Series.
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France). Education for All Forum Secretariat.; United Nations Children's Fund, New York, NY.
REPORT NO	No-7
ISSN	ISSN-1020-0800
PUB DATE	1995-00-00
NOTE	37p.; Photographs may not reproduce adequately. For number 6, see RC 023 547.
AVAILABLE FROM	Documentation and Information Centre, Education Sector, UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France (Reference no. 27.167). Tel: 33-1-45-68-10-29; Fax: 33-1-45-68-56-24; e-mail: cdi-ed@unesco.org; Web site: http://www.unesco.org/education/catalogues/.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Education; Adult Basic Education; *Community Development; *Community Involvement; Culturally Relevant Education; Elementary Education; *Geographic Isolation; *Language Minorities; *Rural Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Thailand

ABSTRACT

Developed in the early 1980s, the Hill Areas Education project provides basic education to children and adults of Thailand's six ethnic minority groups, who live in the remote mountainous region of northern Thailand. The project delivers a locally relevant curriculum, equivalent to the six compulsory grades of the formal education system; promotes the active role of the community in project design and operation; and pursues a philosophy of education for development. Classes are held in village education centers, owned and maintained by the villages themselves. The organization of villages into clusters counters the teachers' isolation in mountain villages and introduces a mutual supervision system. About 35 percent of the curriculum consists of mathematics and the Thai language; the remaining 65 percent covers a broad range of domestic and community concerns. Children take about 6 years to complete the upgraded curriculum, while adults can get through it in 2 years. Teachers help set up village committees, chosen by the community, which serve as links between government agencies and the villagers and oversee community development projects. Evaluation challenges, teacher recruitment and education, suggested program improvements, and issues of linguistic and cultural maintenance are discussed. The six minority groups are briefly described. (Contains photographs.) (SV)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

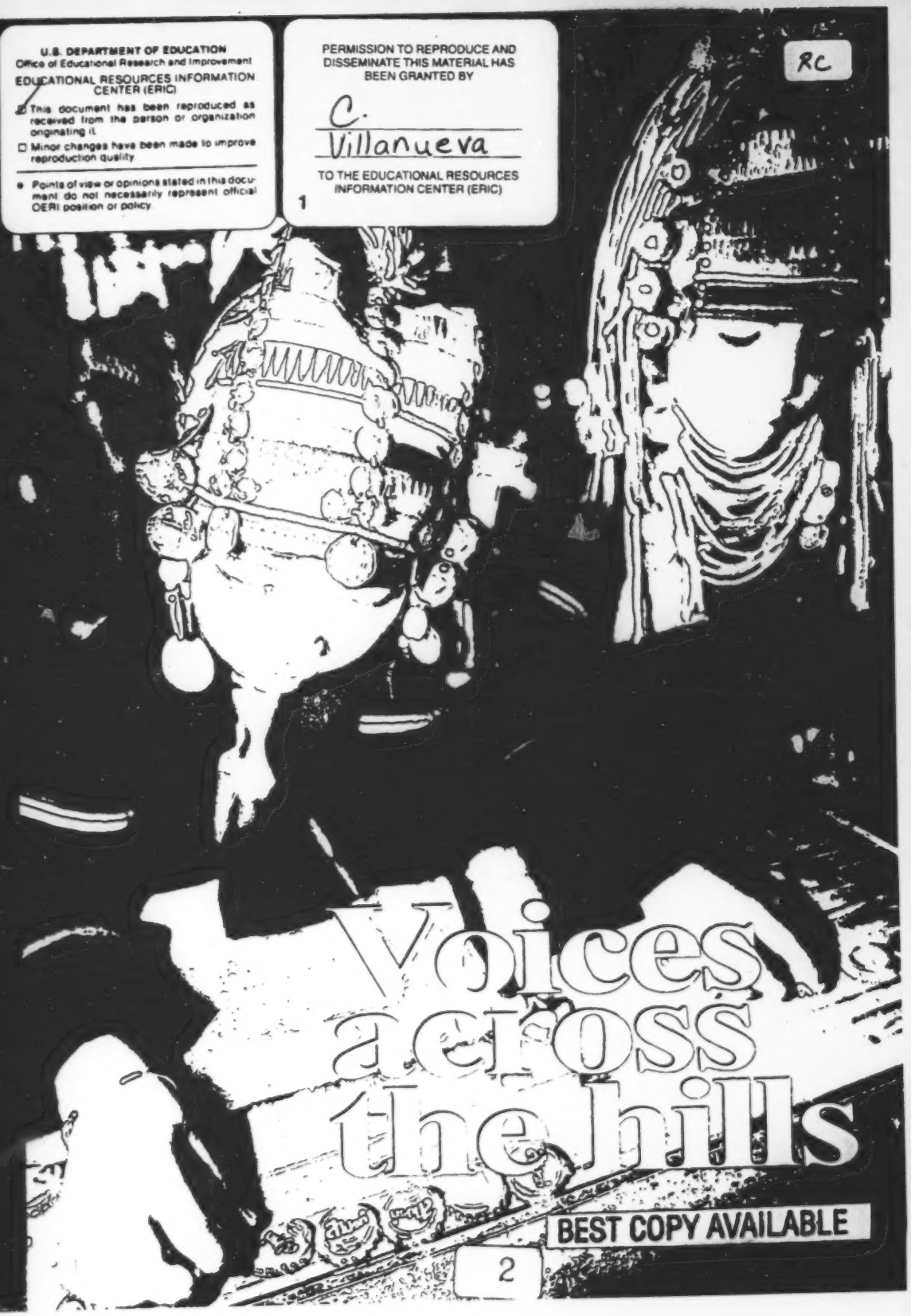
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C. Villanueva
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

RC

EDUCATION FOR ALL
7
Making it work
INNOVATIONS SERIES

ED 464 802

Thailand's hill areas education project



Voices across the hills

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

UNESCO

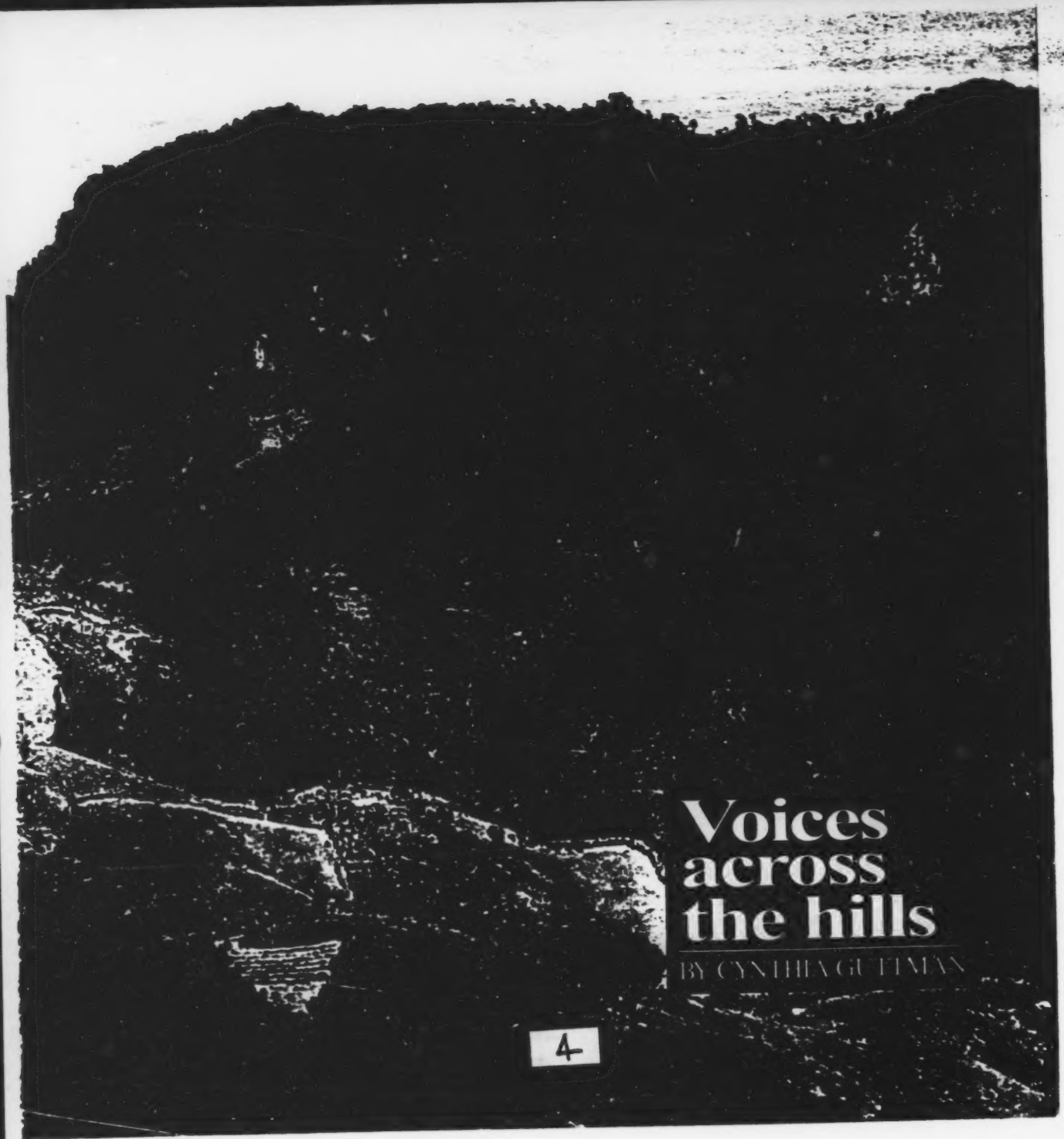
unicef

RC024348

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

To live is to find out what is true.
You can do this only when there is
freedom and a continuous revolution
from within yourself.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE


Voices
across
the hills
BY CYNTHIA RYLANT
4

Education for All: Making it Work

About the project

The World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, recognized that a policy of "more of the same" would not be sufficient to achieve the goal of education for all. Educational systems in most countries clearly need an injection of fresh ideas, a broader vision of how the basic learning needs of all might be met, and the courage to turn this vision into practice.

It was this quest for an expanded and renovated vision of basic education which prompted UNESCO and UNICEF to launch their joint project 'EDUCATION FOR ALL: MAKING IT WORK' right after Jomtien. The two Organizations decided to disseminate and promote examples of educational change – both in the realm of formal and non- formal education– through which the principles of Jomtien would come to life: programmes which provide learning opportunities for children, youth, and adults, including underserved groups and those with special needs; programmes which focus on actual learning acquisition, rather than on mere participation or certification requirements; programmes which aim to provide a solid foundation for life- long learning, which are responsive to the learning needs and conditions of the socio- cultural environment, and which build effective partnerships with local communities and parents.

UNESCO and UNICEF believe that effective and sustainable change in education arises from the inventiveness, experience and dedication of educators, parents, and community leaders at the grassroots. The 'EDUCATION FOR ALL: MAKING IT WORK' project shows that educational innovation and change are already underway in all developing countries and that even the poorest countries are able to take up the challenge of devising educational programmes to fit their means, needs, and aspirations.

The project strategy emphasizes educational innovation in practice rather than discourse. The INNOV database presents many little-known experiences, some of them with considerable potential. The most promising and significant ones are showcased in the present series of booklets, or through films contained in the EDUCATION FOR ALL VIDEOBANK. Others are grouped together and compared in a new series of THEMATIC PORTFOLIOS, devoted to critical issues in basic education.

All these resource materials are used in training workshops, inter-project visits and similar activities meant to support specialists and planners from developing countries in their struggle to turn education for all into a reality.

The project team will be pleased to receive new information, comments and suggestions from all those interested in promoting change and innovation in basic education. We particularly appeal to UNICEF and UNESCO colleagues in the field to co-operate actively with the project.

For more information about the project, please contact:

Inter-agency Co-operation in Basic Education
Basic Education Division
UNESCO
7, Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
FRANCE
Tel: (33-1) 45 68 10 00
Fax: (33-1) 40 65 94 06

Education Cluster
Programme Division
UNICEF
3, United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
U.S.A.
Tel: (212) 326 7000
Fax: (212) 702 7149

If you wish additional copies of the 'Innovations series', please contact UNESCO

"To serve the basic learning needs of all requires more than a recommitment to basic education as it now exists. What is needed is an 'expanded vision' that surpasses [...] conventional delivery systems while building on the best in current practices."

WORLD DECLARATION ON EDUCATION FOR ALL,
Article 2

Contents

Introduction	8
Towards integration	10
The genesis of HAE	12
Concepts for lifelong learning	13
A curriculum for the hill people	
The evaluation debate	17
Teachers for development	18
Crossroads	20
Future directions	22
Identity and social change	24
Conclusion	26
Features:	28
Thailand fact box	28
The hill tribes: *A cultural mosaic*	28
Reactions	30
Bibliography	32

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction

In the Akha villages of northern Thailand, a carved wooden gate traditionally marks the separation between the spirit world of the jungle and the human world. Another symbol, the Thai flag, marks the unity of the Thai nation. When outsiders arrive in these remote hamlets hidden amongst hills of tropical forest, children often run to their welcome, greeting them in Thai and raising their hands in the country's traditional salute of respect. Twenty years ago, such a welcome would have been unimaginable.

The Akha are one of the "chao khao", or hill peoples as they are known by the country's lowlanders. They have their own calendar, dress, language, myths, legends and ceremonies. Like the country's other ethnic minorities — the Karen, Lahu, Lisu, Yao and Meo, they live in remote villages perched at altitudes of some 500 metres.

Many hill tribe villages can only be reached by trekking for hours along serpentine mountain paths winding over steep slopes of forest and fields of upland rice, maize or other crops. Survival needs govern the lifestyle in these parts. Women rise before dawn to pound rice and prepare a fire for making tea. Families spend the day working in the fields and then gather for supper shortly after dusk. There is limited access to health and education. Many villages are too small to justify the building of primary schools.

As many children work in the fields for part of the day, a far more flexible learning system is required. One of the most comprehensive schooling alternatives that exists in this remote region is the Hill Areas Education Project (HAE), a community-based project for children and adults from the country's six main hill tribes. Initially developed between 1980 and 1986 with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in some 45 villages representative of the country's six main tribes, HAE now operates in 600 villages spread across 15 provinces of northern Thailand. Run by the Ministry of Education's Non-formal Education Department, the project has attracted attention from the neighbouring Lao People's Democratic Republic, where the government is studying ways to reach its own hill tribe population.

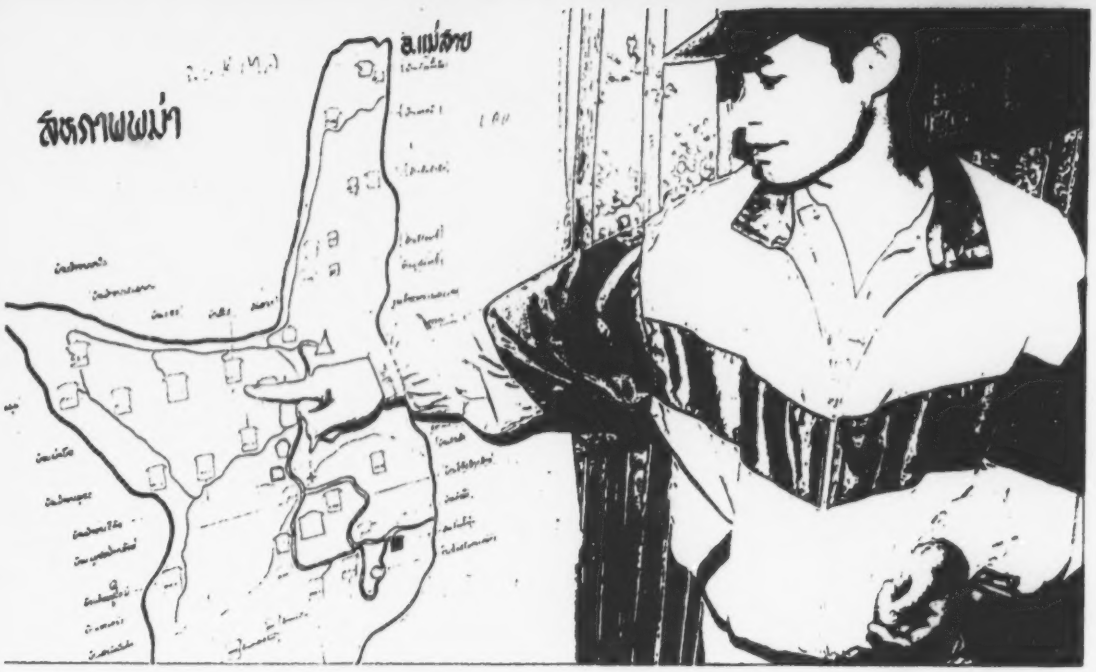
Education and development are inseparable issues at HAE. The project simply could not exist without community participation. The teacher is a community worker and the school is known as the Village Education Centre (VEC), a kind of open house built by the villagers where children come to classes in the daytime and adults gather together at night. The curriculum reflects the hill tribes' culture and lifestyle. The learning process takes into account that Thai is the second language but, at the same time, gives the hill people a sense of civic identity as Thais. Furthermore, it encourages forest preservation, better health and nutrition and pushes for community development programmes.

Although conditions vary from village to village, the sanitation, nutrition, health and education standards of the hill people fall below the national average

Although the documented presence of ethnic minorities in Thailand can be traced back over some 200 years, the largest wave of migration came from Myanmar, the Lao People 's Democratic Republic and China after 1950. Today's hill tribe population is estimated at approximately 550,000 people, with the Karen forming the largest tribal group (49 per cent). Scattered in villages that are often only accessible by foot, highlanders are mainly rice farmers, although nowadays, few villages are self-sufficient in food. According to statistics collected by the Hill Tribe Research Institute in the mid-1980s, about 35 per cent of the total hill tribe population has traditionally relied on the sale of opium crops for income, a figure that is likely to be as low as 15 per cent today. Opium was originally grown for medicinal purposes. With the extension of cash crops, food marketing has become increasingly widespread, and growing numbers of people are migrating to lowland towns for seasonal jobs or relying on farm wage work for income.

An average village counts between 40 to 70 families. Each tribe has different ways of building huts: some are made of clay, some are constructed in bamboo or wooden planks with thatched roofs and usually raised high on stilts. Others, in a more "modern" style, are built in corrugated iron. Livestock, usually pigs, cattle and chickens, are kept beneath the house. The village's most important resident is the headman who is generally selected by the other adult male members of the community. The Akha and Karen headmen, however, inherit the position. In charge of administering village affairs, the headman may be assisted in his task by an informal council of elders and the religious leader or shaman. Although conditions vary from village to village, the sanitation, nutrition, health and education standards of the hill people fall far below the national average: the birthrate in the highlands is almost three times higher than that of the lowlands and infant mortality is almost double. The illiteracy rate is estimated at 88 per cent, compared with the national average of 7 per cent.

Much negative stereotyping surrounds the hill people, especially with regard to opium cultivation and deforestation. Traditionally, hill tribe farmers have used a type of slash- and-burn cultivation, an ancient form of farming widely practiced by forest dwellers around the world. It involves the felling of forests on either a rotation or a pioneer system. Under low population pressure, experts say that it is ecologically sound. The Karen, for instance, use a rotational farming system and construct wet rice terraces wherever there is sufficient water for irrigation. But today, population pressure is putting increasing strain on the land that is no longer left to lie fallow long enough. Soil erosion is visible to all: strips of bare land contrast with the adjacent tropical forest and cultivated areas. This shifting cultivation method is not the only cause of deforestation: road construction, logging and illegal land exploitation have also contributed to the alarming reduction in Thailand's productive forest area. According to a



The Karen account for nearly half of Thailand's hill tribe population. They tend to settle in areas of lower altitude than the other tribes.

report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the country's forest area shrunk at an average annual rate of some 400,000 hectares during the 1980s.

Before 1950 the government had no specific policy towards the hill tribes but in 1951 a Committee for the Welfare of People in Remote Areas was set up. It generated much interest and the problems facing hill people became known. While measures were taken to ban the sale and consumption of opium, new cultivation methods were introduced and forest preservation became a major issue.

A specific government policy was announced in 1976 which strove to integrate the hill people into the Thai nation. This integration policy meant that government services became more widely available to hill people who, by the same token, had to increase their own awareness of such concepts as citizenship and the law. This means a range of obligations, from attending school to ceasing opium cultivation. The thrust of the government's policy has been to encourage the planting of alternative cash crops (red kidney beans, coffee, temperate fruits and leaf vegetables), and to reduce the rate of deforestation through replantation schemes and alternative agricultural techniques. Some of the most important development projects in the highland areas are actually under the patronage of the royal family.

Much remains to be done still to assure the hill people their place within Thai society. Their knowledge of Thai is poor and just 60 per cent have Thai citizenship. Obtaining it demands time and requires proficiency in Thai as well as proof of permanent settlement. Their land, though, usually belongs to the country's forest reserves which makes them vulnerable to relocation.

In view of the lack of coherence and coordination between development programmes in the hill areas, the government drew up a Master Plan for Highland Development. The second master plan, currently underway, aims to improve socio-economic conditions in the hills, emphasize community participation in defining development and calls for further government health and education services.

"People have to be involved in government projects," says Prasert Chaiphikulsith, deputy director of the Hill Tribe Research Institute in Chiang Mai. "If a government agency can't understand the culture and language of each tribe, it cannot work effectively."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The genesis of HAE

Education outside the formal school setting has long been valued in Thailand. Buddhist monks, village elders, local craftsmen and folk artists were educational role models for the vast majority of the population before and after a formal school system was established in the late nineteenth century. In 1940, when the first national census revealed that over 68 per cent of the nation's population were illiterate, the government launched a national literacy campaign and established an Adult Education Division within the Ministry of Education to manage the campaign and other programmes for those not in school. The Adult Functional Literacy for Hill Tribes Programme, launched in 1977 in co-operation with USAID was among these projects.

Hill children have limited or no educational options depending on where their village is located. Several governmental agencies run school programmes, although none has developed a special community-based project. The Department of Public Welfare, the Border Patrol Police, the Office for National Primary Education and religious organizations offer primary education, yet the needs of those in the hill areas are far from being met: currently, it is estimated that out of 4,000 villages in the hill areas, only 1,500 have access to education.

In many ways, the Adult Functional Literacy for Hill Tribes Programme can be considered as one of HAE's precursors. The curriculum was relevant to the hill people's lives and it provided a Grade Four equivalency in the formal system. A few years later, it became clear that the programme needed to be expanded and revised: the length of compulsory education had risen to six years; adults were being served while thousands of children were still out of school and the programme did not seriously address issues related to community development. "HAE was an attempt to improve this situation and develop an entire education system for the hill areas, with supervisors and a curriculum that would be upgraded to the equivalent of a sixth grade model in the formal system," explains Kenneth Kampe, USAID's adviser during the project's six-year pilot phase. The HAE project was put into action by the Non-formal Education Department of the Ministry of Education and the Public Welfare Department of the Ministry of the Interior, with support from the Department of Technical and Economic Co-operation. During the pilot phase, a Project Secretariat was set up at the Northern Region Non-formal Education Centre in Lampang to design, coordinate and implement the HAE project.

HAE's original goals reflect a comprehensive, long-term approach to learning that covers the development of a curriculum and teaching materials for hill children and adults, the training of teachers in the education-for-development spirit and a supervision system which puts the accent on self-reliance. The project's flexible curriculum aims to give communities the tools to define and resolve their own needs, along with the teachers and various agencies working in the hill areas.

The project began by selecting forty-five project villages: all were remote, without a school, and the majority had little contact with government agencies. A total of 67 project teachers were selected and trained before taking up residence in the villages. Training included an introduction to the various hill tribes' cultural practices as well as a basic course in their respective languages. In some cases, teachers spent their first days in the villages sleeping outside under a tree before being welcomed into the headman's home. It was only after being accepted by the community that teachers were able to start discussing some of the concepts behind HAE and creating a local demand for education.

Concepts for lifelong learning

A programme attuned to the cultures of the hill areas which offers children and adults the chance to learn the Thai language.

here are several cornerstones to the HAE philosophy. The first is the belief that whatever different groups within a nation may have in common, their distinctiveness must be reflected in any proposed educational content and approach. The second is the conviction that the community must play an active role in the design and operation of any new service. The third is that education and development go hand in hand. To put this philosophy into action, the project relies on the following:

*The Village Education Centre (VEC). The name clearly differentiates these settings from the traditional school. A similar inviting atmosphere characterizes Village Education Centres from village to village. They are a central meeting point, a gathering place for special occasions, a quiet area for listening to learning tapes or simply somewhere to come to chat with the teacher. Constructed by the villagers with local materials (wood, bamboo, thatching grass), the centres belong to the community itself and are carefully maintained. Outside, flowers and vegetables are planted and kept up by the children and teacher. Inside, paper garlands are streamed across the ceilings; the walls are livened up by children's drawings, spelling and math charts, a map of Thailand and posters showing the local flora and fauna. Above the blackboard, framed photographs of the King and Queen, the Thai flag and the Emerald Buddha (one of Thailand's national treasures) stand as symbols of national integration. The classroom is tidy. Textbooks fill the shelves along the walls. One corner is set aside for listening to

radio programmes and tapes. The teacher's room and kitchen is generally set up in a room adjacent to this main classroom. A medicine cabinet contains a stock of basic first-aid supplies that the teacher knows how to use.

The project has several key methods.

*The *ashram* approach stresses the teacher's continual readiness to provide education and assistance when required by the community — a community which learns both by itself and through the teacher. One of the main architects of the HAE project, Dr Kowit Vorapipatana, referred to these centres as *ashrams*, or *"ah-som"* in Thai. Traditionally, it is from similar shelters that resident monks provided knowledge and learning for the people. Today, this could be interpreted as an education for development approach, whereby everyone in the village is perceived as a learner. The educational model emphasizes the ability to think, to act and to solve problems.

*Teachers could be described as catalyzers who give villagers a sense of confidence in their own ability to improve their living conditions. By their permanent presence in the village, they put the concept of lifelong learning into practice on a daily basis, both inside and outside the classroom.

*The Cluster: To counter the teachers' isolation in mountain villages and introduce a mutual supervision system, the project is organized around the concept of clusters. A cluster of villages is a geographical group of 6 to 8 villages within approximately a half to five hour walk from each other. In each cluster, one centrally located village, which is generally larger than the others, is designated as the "core village" and operates as a type of headquarters for the whole area by dealing with the administration and coordination of HAE activities. A head teacher is appointed in each core village to supervise and support instructors in his/her area. Once a month, teachers from the whole cluster meet to discuss problems, strategies and administrative matters. Teachers take turns in hosting these meetings in their respective villages. This gives each teacher the opportunity to learn and practise organizational skills, as well as a chance to discover neighbouring hill tribe villages.

*The Village Committee includes representatives of the village and is responsible for determining the community's needs and specific policy, overseeing programmes in the village, and eventually, taking charge of the administration and operation of HAE activities.

A curriculum for the hill people

When asked what she likes best about going to school, Silipon, 10, answers without hesitation: learning how to read. Another student proudly says that she is helping her father learn how to write in Thai. "It is very important for the young to learn how to read, write and communicate in Thai," says the village headman in Senmai, a Lahu village of about 300 people. "It allows them to travel safely outside the village." The chance to learn Thai has been one of the major motivations for the hill people's interest in education.

Recognized and accredited by the Ministry of Education in 1982, the HAE curriculum was designed by the Non-formal Education Department and members of the HAE Secretariat helped by teachers posted in the various pilot villages. "At first the teachers went to the villages without any learning materials, just to collect data and observe everyday situations," says Damri Janapirakanit, HAE's secretary during the project's pilot phase. "We sat down with the villagers and they explained their problems to us. The curriculum was developed from this experience." University deans, Ministry of Education officials, researchers from the Tribal Research Centre and teachers discussed the programme's concepts and content during several seminars. The curriculum was then drafted and redrafted to respond to hill children and adults' needs and lifestyles rather than end up as a pale copy of the one used in the formal system. According to several hill area experts, the national Thai curriculum is not easily adaptable to the situation in the highlands. The scarcity of resources imposes a different learning process: the multigrade system adopted in the HAE programme means one teacher, or at best two, for a classroom of up to 50 children. Learning materials had to take this into account and be adapted to the hill tribes.

The two-year adaptation process was not without hitches. "We came to a point where there was great controversy," Kenneth Kampe recalls. "We wanted to make this educational system responsive to people's needs but at the same time the ministry argued that it had to give these people the opportunity to move into higher-level secondary education. This is, of course, important but it happens in very few cases, it only concerns about 5 to 10 per cent of students." Although the curriculum accredited by the ministry is based on the National Primary Education Curriculum and shares common traits with it (namely with regards to Thai language and Mathematics), much of its content is oriented towards life in the hills. According to Tuenjai Deetes, a former HAE Secretariat member and now director of the Hill Areas Development Foundation, a non- governmental organization, "HAE is the best programme ever developed by the Ministry of Education because it is sensitive to local needs and involves people in development". The fact that the programme is accredited by the ministry is important: it recognizes the value and standard of the HAE curriculum and gives students the option of continuing further in the formal system. In its final form, the Primary Education for Hill Areas Communities Curriculum is an ungraded study programme of 6,000 unit-hours divided into two major areas:

1) The Basic Skills section forms 35 per cent of the curriculum, and includes Thai language and Mathematics. Both the above subjects are subdivided into two learning levels, each corresponding to two years of the primary school cur-

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

riculum. There is no teaching of local languages. For all the children enrolled in the HAE project, Thai is a second language. "Children have to understand the meaning of the words they are learning to write," explains one former HAE teacher. At the first level, learners write words to match pictures. The following level, however, demands greater skills in Thai comprehension

and expression. With drawings and short captions, students must answer questions, draw conclusions and express themselves in Thai.

2) The Life and Social Experiences section accounts for 65 per cent of the curriculum and includes 19 basic units of common interest and importance to all hill peoples. The 20th unit is an open-ended local curriculum (13 per cent of the total) which is created jointly by both teacher and community.

The Life and Social Experiences section covers a broad spectrum of concerns, ranging from the home, the community, food, illness, crops, forests, opium, tribal identity to Thai citizenship. Within each unit, the level runs from basic to advanced. Concepts are presented and then written about and concrete practical exercises enable learners to understand the issue at hand. By studying these units, learners progressively gain the ability to describe their local environment and become more aware of strategies to improve it. The unit on crops suggests ways of preventing plant disease, the section on mother and child deals with basic hygiene, the one on opium describes the dangers of addiction.

Skilled development workers are encouraged to participate throughout the project. When possible, the teacher invites forestry, health or agricultural officials to share their experiences with the class.

The open-ended or 20th unit has been the most problematic, partly because of the initiative it requires and the community knowledge that is needed. "The concept of a local curriculum is very good but the main problem is that teachers don't feel they can develop a valid one. They feel it is difficult to select one topic and develop it." According to Walaitat Woralul, who was involved in the project's pilot phase, some, however, have succeeded. In Mae Klang Luang, the teacher runs a clean village campaign for which participants receive credit hours. In Pakha Sukjai village, the teacher is trying to help adult learners market their weaving to raise additional income. In another village, adult learners and the village committee agreed on a programme to reduce opium addiction. Those who were successful in overcoming their addiction received a certain number of credit hours.

To accompany this vast curriculum, the project produced 133 individual textbooks, a figure subsequently reduced to 80 but still ten times higher than the original number of books the project had intended. Teachers provided some of the pictures for the textbooks that were all abundantly illustrated and printed in clear and easy type. The materials differed from those used in the standard primary curriculum in two respects: their content reflected hill tribe life and recognized that Thai was not the learners' mother tongue. Furthermore they aimed to serve self or group study. Exercise books were made separate from textbooks so that they could be shared by several students.

The evaluation debate

The HAE curriculum has its own rhythm (students complete the various units at their own pace) and is ungraded. It takes children about six years (6,000 hours) to complete the curriculum, while adults can get through it in two years. Students must pass 60 per cent of the objectives set out in every unit before going on to the next one. Since the learning materials encourage self-study, they contain self-assessment exercises. Every village centre has a learner evaluation chart on the wall showing the curriculum objectives passed by each learner in Thai Language, Mathematics and Life & Social Experiences. At the end of the course, students receive a primary school certificate.

At any stage, HAE students can pass an equivalency exam enabling them to continue in the formal system. In practice, this seldom happens. Project specialists estimate that no more than 10 per cent reach Grade Six level within the formal system. HAE has been criticized by ministry officials for not turning out enough graduates. The drop-out rate is also especially high amongst girls, many of whom marry at a young age, must work all day in the fields, care for the younger members of the family and help with other household chores. The project has no specific measures to keep girls in school. Some teenagers who can no longer attend daytime classes join the evening sessions for adults.

Flexibility is not always synonymous with continuity and teachers complain about irregular attendance. In some villages classes run morning and afternoon, in others, they are limited to half days. Children also have other activities and traditional ceremonies can also interrupt classes. In one village, following the death of a villager, classes were interrupted for ten days to appease the spirit of the dead man.

The project organizers argue that the number of graduates is not the sole criterion by which to measure success or failure. Since one of HAE's goals is to increase self-reliance and community participation, changes in the community have to be measured to their full extent. "HAE does not just teach education in the classroom. It works with the community for community development," says a teacher.

Teachers have helped to set up Village Committees, chosen by the community, who take charge of activities and serve as a coordinating link between the government, private officials and the villagers. The committee is usually composed of the village headman, senior well-trusted villagers and young people willing to work for their village. Through meetings between village committee members, the teacher and local government officials, villages have set up co-operative stores, rice banks and medicine banks. Other projects include building village water supply systems (such as water tanks and bamboo-conducted water wells) and children's playgrounds.

According to an evaluation conducted in 45 villages by Mahidol University towards the end of the project's pilot phase, village groups had completed 361 projects in 44 villages. In each of the villages a group had been formed. The teacher and village committee work close together to discuss needs and requests to government agencies: from a need for blankets and clothes to inviting the Hill Tribe Welfare Department health officer.

Teachers for development

By their permanent presence in the village, teachers put the concept of lifelong learning into practice on a daily basis, both inside and outside the classroom.

eacher training college hardly prepares young graduates for the challenge of living in remote communities. "A teacher's work is very demanding. They sometimes have to walk 60 kilometres off the road up to a village. They have to live in a different setting, speak a different language, eat different food and work almost 24 hours a day," says Sangwan Charnphichit, deputy director of the Non-formal Education Provincial Centre in Chiang Mai. "They are community development officers. Most of the time, they are the only government representative in the village."

In the classroom, teachers have to quickly become familiar with the HAE curriculum, adjust to managing children at different levels of learning, and learn to work with adult learners. Outside the classroom they must win the acceptance of the villagers, keep in liaison with government agencies and encourage the community to initiate development projects. "Teachers were used to the formal school system. At first they had to adjust themselves and learn to think in a different way," says Damri Janapirakanit.

The first step is to win the villagers' confidence. "I spent a lot of time getting involved in people's activities," explains one teacher. "I attended village meetings, brought food to people's houses in the evening. Whenever villagers had a special event, like a wedding or a birth, I would help. After I helped deliver a baby, I was accepted."

"Everything in the village depends on the teacher," says Prapaporn Duang, a teacher in Ban Pakaem, a village of 180 inhabitants. "They don't have sufficient food all year round or enough medicine. I try to help as much as I can. The children are genuinely interested in the

classes. They come every day and they like to learn. I am proud of them."

Once a month, on a rota basis teachers attend a work meeting hosted by each of the villages in the cluster. This rotation gives teachers in the cluster a chance to become familiar with all the villages. The monthly meetings are a chance for teachers to discuss their day-to-day problems and concerns in their villages and to learn from one another. Organized by the head teacher, these meetings are generally attended by the district education officer (an official from the Non-formal Education Department) and the chief of the operations unit, a government official from the Hill Tribe Welfare Department.

Whilst the project was in its pilot phase (1980-1986), teachers came from a range of backgrounds, from Grade Ten students to university graduates. Today, however, candidates must have a bachelor's degree in any discipline,

although a teacher's degree is preferred. After working for two years as an HAE teacher, they become eligible to apply for a government officer position. Such requirements mean that few hill tribe people actually apply for posts and some people see the position mainly as a first step for joining the civil service. Today, HAE employs 650 teachers, half of whom are women. Between 20 to 30 per cent of the teachers are married.

During the pilot phase, teachers followed a two week pre-service training course before going to the village. The length of this course has now been cut to one week, partly due to budget restrictions, partly because a new teacher learns from other teachers in his/her cluster. The training curriculum varies from one province to another, depending on what is considered appropriate by the Non-formal Education Provincial Centre in charge. Generally, HAE provides teachers with training manuals about education, health, agriculture and community development in hill areas, booklets on working with different tribes and introductory materials on local languages. Upon assignment to a particular village, a teacher receives guidance from the head teacher in the cluster as well as advice from the outgoing teacher. They have a three month trial period and are required to stay in the village for 22 days a month. The remaining eight days give them a chance to return home.

The HAE project suffers from a high rate of teacher turnover, a problem partly linked to welfare: teachers are on one-year renewable contracts, but although their salaries (5,000 baht per month/US$200) are equal to those of formal primary school teachers, they receive none of the latter's financial compensations such as hardship allowance or medical and health care for their families. "Because we cannot provide enough security and welfare, we lose a lot of teachers and people lose confidence in them," said the deputy director of the Chiang Mai Provincial Centre. A former HAE supervisor feels that the Non-formal Education Department doesn't always take teachers' and supervisors' recommendations into account."

Even during the pilot phase, teachers were paid by the government. According to the USAID advisor, this was stipulated in the grant package to ensure that the project would carry on after external funding stopped.

Very few hill people are HAE teachers, one of the aspects the government wishes to change. It should be noted that during the pilot phase, the Secretariat actively tried to recruit teachers from the hill tribes and others who could speak local languages. Preference was given to those who could speak a hill tribe language. But evidence showed that hill tribe teachers didn't always win the villagers' respect as effectively as teachers from the lowlands, and some tribes would not accept teachers who belonged to a different tribe. They would, however, accept teachers from the lowlands. The present recruitment method involves an examination covering several disciplines (Thai, Math, non-formal education). According to the deputy director of the Non-formal Education Provincial Centre in Chiang Mai, few applications from hill tribe candidates make it through to the final stage.

To increase the number of hill tribe teachers, the project is currently testing a volunteer training programme for graduates of non-formal education programmes. If students stay in the village to pursue secondary education by distance learning, they can become assistants to HAE teachers and the government waives their school fees. Jangha, a teenager belonging to the Lahu tribe, is one promising example of this policy. He finished primary education in his village and is continuing secondary schooling through distance education. Every morning, he takes care of one part of the class, allowing the teacher to give more attention to another group. "I would like to get a bachelor's degree and help my community to improve its living conditions," he says.

ince the end of the pilot phase in 1986, HAE has expanded to 600 villages. Some experienced observers, however, feel that the project might have suffered in quality and no real evaluation has been carried out since the end of the pilot phase.

During the pilot phase, a central coordinating body known as the HAE secretariat, located in the Northern Region Non-formal Education Centre in Lampang, was responsible for the overall running of the project. When foreign funding ended and the pilot phase came to a close, the secretariat was dismantled in accordance with the project's initial outline. HAE ceased to enjoy its special status to become one of many programmes run by the Department of Non-formal Education. "During the pilot project period, there was a strong desire to improve everything. We had the time and energy to keep in contact with teachers so we could learn from each other," explains the head of the Hill Tribe Education Development section at the Lampang Northern Region Non-formal Education Centre. "When the pilot project finished and it was turned into a normal operation and became part of the bureaucratic system, supervisors and administrators changed and new people came in who had their own way of thinking, judging and operating."

Responsibilities for the project were divided out amongst the district, provincial and regional government levels. The district level is the one closest to the field: district officers directly oversee the running of HAE in their respective areas and meet with head teachers every month. The provincial level handles teacher hiring and training and coordinates operations in each province. Requests for more teachers or books, for example, are submitted by the various districts to the provincial office, which in turn submits a yearly budget proposal to the Department of Non-formal Education. The provincial centre works closely with the Hill Tribe Welfare Department to ensure that education and development are integrated at field level. The regional centre can be likened to a think-tank. It is in charge of research and suggests new orientations for the HAE project to the Non-formal Education Department. It feels, though, that it has lost much of the influence it had played during the pilot phase. "There is little long-term planning," says Dr Suchin Petcharngsa from the Northern Region Non-formal Education Centre in Lampang. "Unfortunately, we are not top of the

Budget restrictions and the transfer of HAE to the regular educational system have affected the programme's quality. Still, it often represents the only opportunity children from these isolated areas may have to learn.

list when it comes to budget allocation."

HAE has come to a kind of pause in the past two years. Provincial centres have only received enough to cover teacher's salaries, with no additional funding to reprint materials or hire further teachers for the many villages that have expressed interest in opening a Village Education Centre.

Not surprisingly then, the teachers' most common complaint is not so much about salaries but the lack of materials that prevents them from teaching effectively. There are often not enough exercise books to go around the class. The textbooks are very tattered and many sets are incomplete. The lack of books makes self-study difficult. "If there were enough textbooks, children could study more at home," says one teacher who compensates for the lack of materials by going on frequent study excursions to the forest and fields.

One of the more potentially harmful consequences of budget restrictions has been a reduced emphasis on teacher training and support. "During the pilot phase, everything was more intensive, from training to supervision," says Walaitat Warlul, who conducted teacher training and evaluations during the pilot phase. "Since the project has been transferred to the regular system, there are constraints. Supervision can't be carried out as regularly and the quality of teacher training is lower."

The philosophy at the heart of HAE has become more difficult to promote. "In principle, the *ashram* concept (with the teacher promoting development) is still there, but in practice, it is not always followed by the new generation. You need a person or a group of people to give this vision," says a former HAE staff member who now works for a local NGO in the hill areas. "Supervisors expect to see teachers in the classroom whereas the HAE philosophy puts the teacher at the centre of the community. The HAE has in some ways become formalized."

Future directions

The government is in the course of revising the HAE programme, and plans to expand it to 2,500 villages from the present 600.

AE's future is as much influenced by the management of the programme itself as by the broader process of development in the hill areas. If HAE has not produced many graduates, has it really helped communities advance? The sheer demand for schooling in hill areas is proof of the value families place on education. "Every village wants education, but we cannot respond to the demand", says Damri Janapirakanit. The fact that HAE started out in villages where no educational service existed cannot be overlooked. Despite the revision the programme requires, its basic philosophy and structure remain sound. The Village Education Centre is the result of a community choice and investment. The cluster-wide supervision system is an effective way of developing networks among teachers, government agencies and villages. The presence of a full-time teacher with a genuine interest in the community's well-being has been a source of confidence and an impetus towards tightening village structures and initiating projects, from rice banks to co-operatives.

According to Kosit Kosanasanti, director of the Chiang Mai Non-formal Education Centre, "There are very obvious differences between those communities which have taken up the project and those which haven't, in terms of cleanliness, awareness about the environment, drug use as well as in the village's social organization. Children and adults who attend or have attended HAE classes also tend to be more expressive, outgoing and ready to express their ideas and opinions."

The extent to which teachers are capable of creating a more participatory atmosphere and build bridges with other government agencies varies from village to village. Communities that

appear better prepared to improve their living conditions are those receiving steady support from a non-governmental organization. Some 38 NGOs work in the hill areas on issues ranging from agriculture to AIDS. The Centre for the Coordination of Non-governmental Tribal Development Organizations (CONTO) promotes understanding and co-operation among hill people, government officials and NGOs. When an NGO starts to work with a community to define its needs, it can file a request to the Provincial Non-formal Education Centre to run the HAE programme in that village. In some cases, the teachers are paid by the NGO, in others, by the organization. The latter might also provide funding for opening a Village Education Centre. Several NGOs and foreign-funded development projects use the HAE model: it is readily available and tends to fit their philoso-

phy of promoting self-reliance and community participation.

The Hill Areas Development Foundation (HADF), for example, works in 28 villages of four different tribal groups. Founded in 1986 by Teunjai Deetes, an experienced volunteer teacher in the hills, the organization promotes contour farming, or Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT), which prevents the soil from eroding and revitalizes the land. On several occasions, the international community has recognized her organization's work: at the 1992 Earth Summit, Deetes won a Global 500 award from the United Nations Environmental Programme; last year, she won the coveted Goldman Environmental Prize.

In all these communities, villagers can follow the HAE programme and the foundation's field staff make regular visits to villages to discuss people's concerns and ideas. It has run special training programmes and study tours for men and women about sustainable agriculture technology and reforestation. Gradually, these activities are helping hill tribes integrate by breaking some of the negative images associated with their slash-and-burn agricultural techniques and by improving their relationship with government authorities.

In Jagorna village, for example, Mr Jagor Airtae, a Lahu community leader, received a Good Citizen Award in 1993 for mobilizing hill people from five villages to help protect forest land through effective control of wildfire. He encouraged the practice of sustainable agriculture and the formation of a forest conservation network. Education must play a key role in furthering the development process: at a meeting with the foundation's staff, he therefore evoked the possibility of building a new, larger Village Education Centre that would serve as a resource centre for several villages. The Hill Area Development Foundation also pays particular attention to women's involvement in development, a dimension that is not specifically emphasized in the HAE material. As one specialist from the Tribal Research Institute writes, "the status of girls or daughters is generally beneath that of male offspring; consequently fewer resources are invested in them including food, health care and education"

The theme could be more thoroughly examined as part of the HAE revision commissioned by the Director-general of the Department of Non-formal Education to the Northern Region Centre in Lampang. In its draft proposal, to be examined by the cabinet in 1995, it suggests the following improvements:

1) extend HAE from the current number of 600 Village Education Centres to 2,500,
2) provide vocational training activities,
3) adapt the curriculum and materials to respond to new problems and needs of the hill tribes,
4) extend HAE to secondary education,
5) promote networking with other agencies and NGOs working in the hill areas,
6) set up a training institute for personnel working in the highlands.

These goals reflect the interdependence between education and development that lies at the heart of HAE, and the necessity for co-operation and understanding amongst HAE staff, government agencies and NGOs. "We want to strengthen the existing programme and emphasize the community-based approach," says Sombat Suwanpitak of the Non-formal Education Department's planning division.

The government is also fully aware that HAE is financially attractive. Where as a formal school costs approximately 1 million baht (US$40,000) to construct, a Village Education Centre costs 10,000 baht (US$400). Learning materials for HAE cost 53 baht (US$2.12) per student against 83 baht (US$3.32) in the formal school. The revised HAE calls for an expenditure of 2800 million baht ($112 million) over a seven-year period.

Identity and social change

The questions that HAE raised in its early days remain as valid as ever: How can education help people improve living conditions and give hill tribes similar rights as lowlanders whilst retaining their specific cultural identity?

Chanchai Saensong has been associated with HAE as a teacher, an adviser and a secretariat member since the project's beginnings. He has seen his village change dramatically in the past decade. "You can hardly tell it's a hill tribe village," he explains. "We have roads, electricity, television, and videos. People no longer wear their traditional costumes." Although this represents one extreme, increasing government presence and contacts between highlands and lowlands have altered the hill tribes' perception of education, even in remote villages where living conditions remain extremely basic. This means that today, many parents would prefer to send their child to a formal school 45 minutes away from their home village because they feel it provides better quality education and more opportunity than HAE. "They are probably smarter than we are, they can see more clearly than we can," says former USAID advisor Kenneth Kampe. "That's probably what hill people need to be accepted in society."

Still, even if this happens, there are many remote villages still unreached by education where the chances of a formal primary school being built are slim. The questions that the project raised in its early days remain as valid as ever. How can education help hill people improve their living conditions and give them similar rights as lowlanders whilst retaining their specific cultural identity? Education experts realize the question is relevant to ethnic minorities throughout the world, especially at a time when communication technology and economic globalization have the potential to weaken cultural diversity even further. To be effective, basic education needs to meet the most disadvantaged on their own cultural, social and economic ground. Without question, contacts between hill tribes and lowland Thais will continue to increase, and it is crucial that the former are not put at a disadvantage because they cannot communicate in Thai. At the same time however, integration is a two-way process. Recognition of hill tribe identity and culture will come with greater integration with the rest of the country and when more hill tribe people take up Thai citizenship.

Language is one of the most intimate components of identity, it is intricately linked to culture and history. Research points to the benefits of initial literacy training in the participant's mother tongue, although such a choice depends on a number of other factors. Given that HAE policy is being reviewed, it may be judicious to take a more critical look at linguistic policy and analyze to what extent HAE helps promote the cultural identity of each tribe while enabling them to communicate in Thai and identify with the Thai nation.

As integration continues, part of the effort to protect indigenous cultures will come from the tribes themselves. The Akha have been instrumental in defending their own culture. Ten years ago, a group founded the Association for Akha Education and Culture in Thailand (AFECT). It has developed an Akha script and transcribed some of the complex rituals governing Akha life. In ten remote Akha villages previously unreached by education, AFECT is currently running a non-formal programme using HAE materials alongside ones it has written itself in Akha language.

Students learn Thai at the same time as they study their own history, proverbs, traditions and legends in their mother tongue. Its goal: to make children and adults proud of their own identity

and give them the chance to take part in Thai society. "They have to learn Thai," says AFECT's director Aju Jupoh. "They can go to the lowlands, but they should feel they have their own identity and be proud of their origins and culture." Since classes began in 1994, they have generated visible enthusiasm on the part of children and adults alike. The association employs highly motivated, bilingual Akha teachers who receive a higher salary than HAE instructors recruited by the Non-formal Provincial Centre. "The children learn quickly because as soon as they don't understand something, I can translate it into Akha. We can get to the point directly," says one of the association's teachers. The benefits of a bilingual education should be more closely analyzed in partnership with NGOs with extensive experience in hill areas.

As part of this move, special emphasis should be put on recruiting hill tribe teachers since the latter have the potential to become important role models in their communities. Previous experience with hill tribe teachers should be more carefully analyzed. Associations with extensive experience in hill areas should contribute information. Measures could be considered such as lower initial entry requirements, accelerating teacher training and special incentives.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Conclusion

In International Literacy Day 1994, HAE received a UNESCO prize for its innovative community-based approach to education. The prize is an encouragement for a project that has come to a turning point. Although the hill tribe population represents no more than 1 per cent of Thailand's population, the government's commitment to "Education for All" requires viable alternatives to reach these isolated groups. Under the country's seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (1992-1996), one of the Ministry of Education's top priorities is to provide compulsory education for the 2.5 per cent of the population who remain unreached. The hill tribes belong to this category, which also includes street children, women in the 15 to 40-year-old bracket, the rural poor and the disabled.

The number of hill villages still unreached by any form of education and the rapidly changing social context of the hill areas puts the government before a challenge. By and large, it is estimated that around 15 per cent of hill tribe people are literate. Illiteracy means greater vulnerability to poverty and exploitation. Unless minority people can participate in defining development in their communities, they are all the more likely to be defeated by labour migration, AIDS, prostitution, drug addiction and debt, which have all profoundly altered traditional social structures and cultures. It is essential for education for minority people to promote national integration while giving a sense of identity and pride.

If HAE is to remain faithful to its principles of furthering self-reliance and education for development, its goals, concepts and methods have to be espoused at all levels. Because of its day-to-day contact with villagers, HAE has the potential not only to provide basic education, but to ensure that development programmes are evolved and implemented with community participation. If teachers have regular quality training and receive concrete support from the project's higher echelons, they have the potential to sensitize officials working in the hill areas to villagers' culture, lifestyle and preoccupations. According to USAID's advisor during HAE's pilot phase, a genuine commitment existed during this period: "One of the reasons HAE succeeded was not because of the money or the government's interest, but because of a small group of Thai idealists involved in the project. It is because of these people and their dedication that it worked."

HAE's future rests not only on quality improvements but also on the strength of its alliances with NGOs, university specialists and government departments working in the hill

areas. HAE has little meaning if it is not synonymous with better nutrition, better health and greater security. Environmental conservation, improved health and education services, control of opium production and better living standards cannot be achieved without ensuring the hill people's full involvement at all stages of the development process and this towards the goal of founding self-reliant sustainable communities.

If lifelong education is to become a reality, it also means providing further opportunities in the villages, from primary education to vocational training. This is one of the proposals outlined in the revised package. "The problem today lies in the lack of educational services beyond primary level," says the deputy director of the Tribal Research Institute in Chiang Mai. "When hill children become teenagers, they feel there is no future. Boys just contribute to the ranks of unskilled labour in the towns and girls are employed as prostitutes. If education were more widely available, some of these problems could be prevented."

Beyond quality and partnerships, HAE cannot work without a well-defined vision that puts the community, and its advancement, at the centre of the learning process so that all participants grow in the process. Tuenjai Deetes, who moved to the hills for many years as a teacher and development worker, realizes that this means understanding the reasons that guide one's actions: "You cannot have a vision for education without a vision for society."

FEATURES
Making it work

Thailand Fact Box

Population:	56.8 million
Male illiteracy rate:	3.9%
Female illiteracy rate:	10.1%
Length of compulsory education:	6 years
Gross enrollment ratio: (primary level)	90%
Gross enrollment ratio: (secondary level)	33%

Source: UNESCO
World Education Report 1993

The hill tribes: A cultural mosaic

The hill tribes of Thailand are made up of several different minorities. Most live high up in remote and forested mountain areas. The six basic ethnic groups are the following:

Karen

In 1988, the Karen accounted for 49 per cent of the total hill tribe population in Thailand. The Karen belong to the Sino-Tibetan linguistic family. They tend to settle in areas of lower altitude than the other tribes. Although many Karen build terrace fields for wet rice, nearly all are engaged in land rotation or cyclical bush fallow cultivation. Rice and vegetables are their major crops. Unlike other highland peoples, kinship is traced through the maternal line. Most Karen in Thailand are animists, their major spirit is the Lord of Land and Water who has power over the land, water, trees and rice fields. A growing number of Karen practise either Buddhism or Christianity. The desire for harmony is predominant in Karen culture.

Meo

The second largest group after the Karen, the Meo, or Hmong as they call themselves, make up 15 per cent of the hill people. The extended Meo family is patrilineal. Their religion is a combination of pantheism and shamanism with an emphasis on ancestor worship. Most

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Meo villages are located at high altitudes, above 1,000 metres. They are pioneer or primary shifting cultivators. Rice and corn are the main subsistence crops.

Lahu

The Lahu, are believed to have come from the Tibetan Plateau and migrated over the centuries to China, Myanmar, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand.

They account for 11 per cent of the hill tribe population. Villages are usually located high in the mountains at about 1,000 metres. The Lahu rely primarily upon agriculture with dry rice and corn as the staple crops but many varieties of cash crop are also grown, such as melons, peppers, beans, millet and vegetables. The Lahu see themselves as ruled over by a god named Geusha and like their highland neighbours, they worship their ancestors. The Lahu call themselves the "children of blessings" and pray for blessings in their many rites and ceremonies. Today, however, approximately one third of the total Lahu population in Thailand is Christian.

Yao

Making up 6.56 per cent of the hill tribe population, the Yao (also known as Mien) came from southern China over 200 years ago. Dry rice and corn are their most important crops. The extended family is common and polygamous marriage is practised. The Yao have adopted many characteristics of Chinese culture, perhaps more so than any other tribe in the area.

Akha

Generally believed to have migrated from the Tibetan highlands, the first Akha settlement in Thailand is thought to go back to the 1880s. Today, the Akha account for 6 per cent of the highland population. Most Akha in Thailand live along ridges at altitudes of 1,000 metres. They are shifting cultivators and grow dry rice and various kinds of vegetable. Patrilineal clans mediate all relationships concerning kinship ties, marriage, residential patterns and rights of succession. The Akha are pantheists who place special emphasis upon ancestor-worship and spirit offerings.

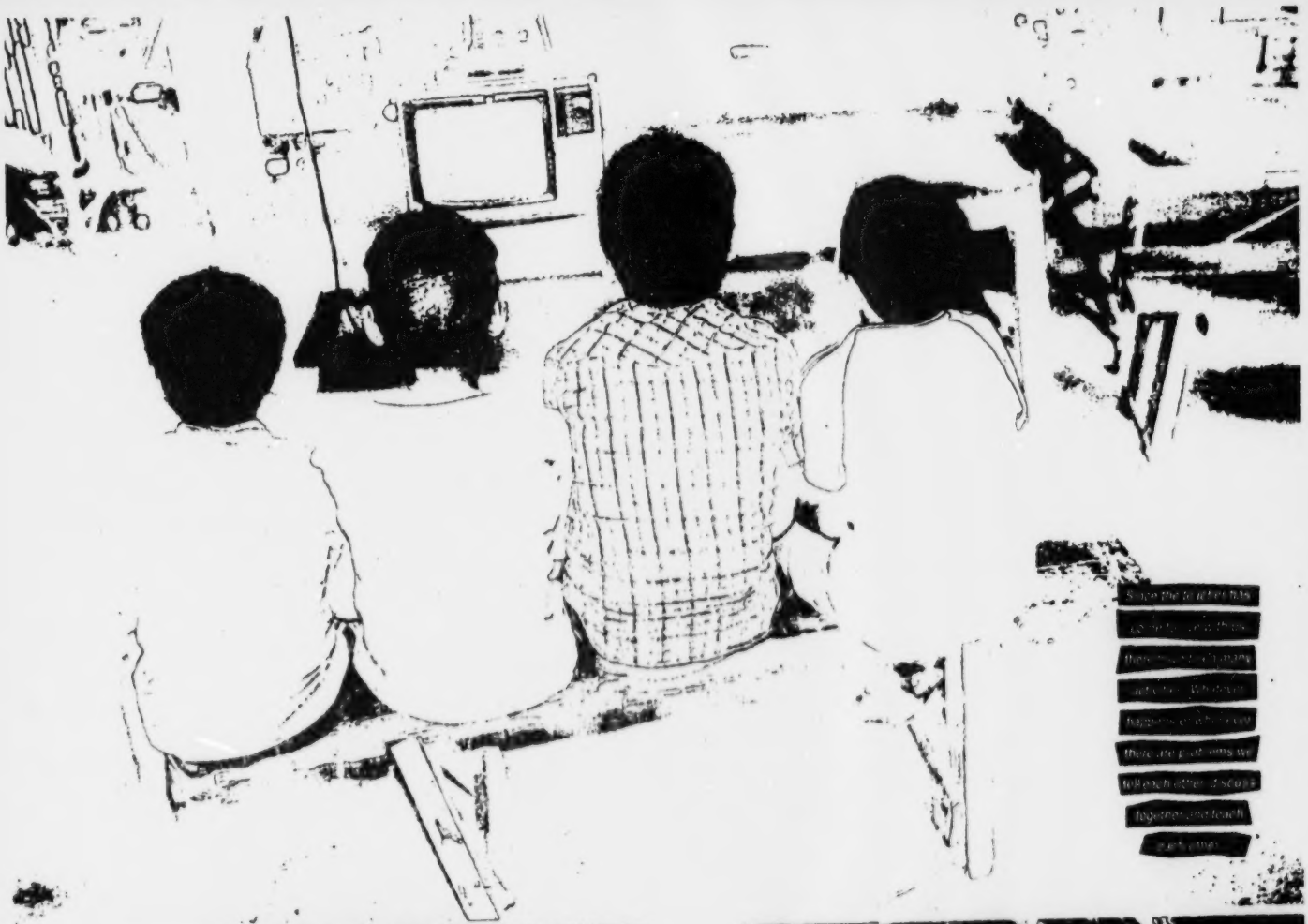
Lisu

The Lisu account for 4.55 per cent of the hill tribe population and are believed to have originally come from southern China. Most Lisu settlements are located in the highlands at an average altitude of about 1,000 metres. They grow rice, corn and vegetables as subsistence crops. The Lisu tribe is made up of several patrilineal clans. Although the Lisu share many cultural affinities with the Chinese, they are principally animists and ancestor worshippers.

SOME VILLAGERS
REACTIONS
TO THE
HAE PROJECT

SOME TEACHERS
REACTIONS
TO THE HAE
PROJECT

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



HAE is a very good project, because it opens up a much wider educational
opportunity for the hill tribe people. I have heard many people say that they want the hill tribe
people to become self-reliant. Without education, that wish can never be fulfilled.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Education for All, Making it Work is a major international UNESCO/UNICEF programme to collect, analyse and promote successful basic education projects in the developing world.

Previous issues in the series:

No. 1
All Children can Learn
Chile's 900 Schools Programme for the Underprivileged. 1993
(English, Spanish•, French•, Arabic)

No. 2
In our own Hands
The story of Saptagram, a women's self-reliance movement in Bangladesh, 1994
(English, French, Arabic)

No. 3
Within Reach
The story of PROPEL, a non-formal education project for rural children in India, 1994
(English, French•, Arabic)

No. 4
Blazing the Trail
The Village Schools of Save the Children/USA in Mali, 1994 (English, French)

No. 5
On the Right Track
Servol's early childhood and adolescent development programmes in Trinidad and Tobago, 1994.
(English, French)

No. 6
Breaking Through
TOSTAN's non-formal basic education programme in national languages in Senegal, 1995.
(English, French)

•*Out of print*

Ministry of Education.
Thailand Centennial: 1892-1992.

Mckinnon, J., Vienne, B.
Hill Tribes Today.
White Lotus-Orstom, Bangkok, 1989.

Rao, Y.S.
Asia-Pacific Tropical Forestry: Ecological Disaster or Sustainable Growth?
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Bangkok, 1994.

Tribal Research Institute.
The Hill Tribes of Thailand.
Chiang Mai, 1989.

UNFDAC.
Second Master Plan for Highland Development and Narcotics Crops Control in Thailand.
Bangkok.

HAE PUBLICATIONS

Department of Public Welfare, Ministry of Interior, Department of Non-formal Education, Ministry of Education. ***The Hill Areas Education Model.***

Department of Non-formal Education.
On the Road called HAE.
1986.

Department of Non-formal Education.
The Answers are in the Villages.
1986.

Department of Non-formal Education.
Learning Together: Building a Better Community. 1986.

Making it work

Supervising editors:
Dieter Berstecher
Rosa-Maria Torres
Art Direction:
Alfonso Muñoz
Photography:
Olivier Vidal

The opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and not necessarily those of UNESCO or UNICEF.

Photo-engraving:
SG Communiktion
Printed by Crisol in Madrid, Spain

For more information about the HAE project, please write to:
Hill Areas Education (HAE) Project
Northern Region, Non-formal Education Centre, Amphur Muang, Lampang, Thailand

Acknowledgements

ACCESS (Aids Counselling Centre and Education Service)

***Aju Jupoh** and the Association for Akha Education and Culture*

***Tuenjai Deetes** and the Hill Areas Development Foundation*

***Dr Usa Duongsaa** (former member of the Provincial Non-formal Education Centre in Chiang Mai)*

***Dr Kenneth Kampe** (former USAID advisor)*

***Walaitat Woralul** (former HAE member)*

***Dr Damri** and the Provincial Non-formal Education Centre in Chiang Rai*

***Dr Kosit** and the Provincial Non-formal Education Centre in Chiang Mai*

***Dr Sombat,** Planning Division, Non-formal Education Department Ministry of Education*

***Dr Suchin** and the Northern Region Non-formal Education Centre in Lampang*

The Hill Tribe Research Institute, Chiang Mai

The villages of Ban Sa, Ban Pakaem, Jakona, Klang Luang, Pakha Sukjai and Senmai

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The hill tribes of Thailand live in remote villages perched high in the mountains and hills, sometimes at altitudes of over a 1000 metres. They have their own specific way of life, language, legends and culture.

Set up in the early 80's, the Hill Areas Education Project (HAE) is a community-based project for the various hill peoples. It operates in 600 villages in 15 provinces of northern Thailand and is aimed at both adults and children. The curriculum reflects hill tribe culture and lifestyle. The project is run by the Ministry of Education's Non-formal Education Department. The learning process takes into account that Thai is the second language but at the same time gives the hill people a sense of civic identity as Thais. Through education it encourages forest preservation, better health and nutrition and pushes for community development programmes. The people and village leaders are directly consulted and the teacher often goes beyond his role as educator to respond to local needs. This spirit of self-reliance has been used to set up village groups. These groups have so far completed some 361 projects in 44 villages.

In 1994, on International Literacy Day, HAE received a UNESCO prize for its innovative educational project and its community-based approach to education for all.

The editors

Making it work

37

ISSN 1020-0800

©UNESCO, 1995.